

## GLADIOLA

gladiola  
picked for  
the long

glass vase  
on the kitchen  
table

for guests  
arriving from  
a town

far  
south of  
here

the man nearly  
blind and  
the woman

recently  
having had a  
tumor

removed  
from her  
lung

so the  
gladiola  
to make

the table  
pleasant  
on a

late summer  
night  
blooming

in all its  
orange  
redness

fiercely  
clinging  
to life

## AGAIN HE IS AN OLD MAN

thinking of  
my childhood i  
cannot

picture  
my father  
as a young man

as though he  
were always  
old

i can of course  
look at  
pictures

of him from  
that time  
but those

images fade  
quickly and  
again he

is an old man  
in my mind  
old on the

day of my birth  
as old as he  
is now

out in his garden  
putting new fence  
posts up

dragging away  
to the  
edge

of the woods  
the  
ravaged ones

—Ronald Baatz

Mt. Tremper, NY